

Minutes

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Regular meeting

6:30 p.m. June 24, 2026

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present: Chair Will Senner and members G. Miller, Sara Riek and Daniel Widis

Absent: Vice Chair Hannah Peele

Staff: Planner Joseph Hoffheimer and Town Attorney Michael Bowen

1. Call to order, roll call, and confirmation of quorum

Chair Will Senner called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. He called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

2. Commission's mission statement

Senner read the statement.

3. Agenda changes

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. Minutes review and approval

Minutes from regular meeting on May 6, 2026.

Motion: Senner moved to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on May 6, 2026, as submitted. Member G. Miller seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

5. Written decision review and approval

Written decision from regular meeting on May 6, 2026.

Motion: Senner moved to approve the written decision from the regular meeting on May 6, 2026, as submitted. Member Sara Riek seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

6. New business

- A. Certificate of Appropriateness Application: 400 N. Cameron St.
Convert existing screened porch to glass-enclosed porch (PIN 9874184493).

Senner opened the public hearing.

Senner asked whether there were any conflicts of interest or bias among the commissioners. None were disclosed. All commissioners disclosed that they had visited the site in preparation for reviewing the application.

Planner Joseph Hoffheimer was sworn in. Michael Irwin, the property owner, was sworn in to speak on behalf of the application.

Hoffheimer presented the staff report. He noted that the inventory information, application materials, and applicable design standards would be entered into the record as evidence. He provided the staff comments:

- Three very similar Certificate of Appropriateness applications were recently approved at 225 W. Tryon St., 233 Lydia Lane, and 309 Mitchell St.

Irwin introduced the application, noting that the project is very similar to the 309 Mitchell St. application and uses the same contractor. He cited the maintenance concerns for the 14-year-old porch.

Senner read Standard 10 for Porches, Entrances, and Balconies, which states that it is not appropriate to enclose a front porch, and that a rear or side porch should only be enclosed in a way that preserves the character of the home.

Irwin confirmed that the existing roof will be preserved. He said the existing wood supports will be replaced with aluminum posts, one at a time, in the same order. He said all the posts will be aluminum except for two, based on the structural engineer's recommendation to leave those two as wood to support the main cross-beam running across the top. He confirmed that the posts will be the same size as the existing ones. Irwin said the lower part of the glass will be fixed, and the top part will be sliders. He added that the lower portion will be positioned lower than it is in the existing structure.

Senner observed that while it is standard practice to preserve primary vertical framing as wood and install the aluminum and glass within the wood frame, he did not find the proposed use of aluminum and glass for the rear porch enclosure to be a significant concern. He noted that although the porch is visible from the side due to its location on a corner lot, the aluminum material is not incongruous for a rear-facing structure. Irwin confirmed that the existing board at the bottom will remain.

Senner summarized the commissioners' discussion: The application is consistent with the design standards, particularly Standard 10 for Porches, Entrances, and Balconies. The project is enclosing an existing porch at the rear of the property, although on a corner lot. The materials are listed in the compatibility matrix, although wood would be preferable. Aluminum framing has been approved previously. The roof is being preserved.

Senner closed the public hearing.

Motion: Miller moved to find as fact that the 400 N. Cameron St. application is in keeping with the overall character of the Historic District and complies with all relevant standards of evaluation based on the commission's discussion of the application and the standards of evaluation in Section 3.12.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance because the plans are consistent with the Historic District Design Standards: Windows; Doors; and Porches, Entrances, and Balconies. Riek seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion: Miller moved to approve the application as submitted. Riek seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

B. Certificate of Appropriateness Application: 212 S. Occoneechee St.

Construct a 12-ft. by 19-ft. wood carport (PIN 9864757505).

Senner opened the public hearing.

Senner asked whether there were any conflicts of interest or bias among the commissioners. None were disclosed. All commissioners disclosed that they had visited the site in preparation for reviewing the application.

David Cates, draftsperson for the proposed plans, and Jeanne Beckley, the property owner, were sworn in to speak on behalf of the application.

Hoffheimer presented the staff report. He noted that the inventory information, application materials, and applicable design standards would be entered into the record as evidence. There were no staff comments.

Senner observed that the massing of the carport is subordinate to the primary structure, set back at the end of the driveway, and is consistent with other carports and garages in the district. He noted that the proposed materials are compatible with the compatibility matrix. He added that the project minimizes grading or site disturbances.

The commissioners discussed the congruence of the design of the chamfer brackets and lattice. Cates explained that the corner brackets provide necessary lateral support and that the design was chosen for aesthetic reasons. He said that the lattice would serve as a functional screening choice selected for its light weight and airiness. Beckley added that the lattice will screen trash cans and car visibility from the street.

Beckley said the lattice will be cedar with fairly wide spacing between the slats. Cates said the openings will be less than four inches. Commissioners expressed concern that a large-scale lattice might be incongruous with the character of the district and the existing structure. Hoffheimer noted that the design standards do not provide much detail about lattice.

Beckley confirmed that the circular opening at the top of the structure will be on both the front and the back. She said she plans to have an artist create a stained glass piece to match the gable on the house, but that will only be on the front of the structure.

Cates said the pitch of the roof is low so it minimizes blocking the windows of the house.

The commissioners discussed the alignment of the carport. It was observed that the proposed carport is currently aligned with the property line rather than with the house, which is not a common characteristic within the district. Cates agreed to adjust the design so the structure runs parallel to the home. Beckley explained that the back of the carport will function as a fence and will abut the corner of the deck, replacing existing fencing.

The commissioners discussed alignment constraints posed by the driveway shape and property line setbacks. Beckley noted that moving the carport further toward the street would block the views from additional windows. Cates proposed rotating the structure from its southwest corner—the point where it meets the deck—to align it with the house while respecting the five-foot setback. He said that shifting the structure toward the street would create an odd gap and would not be able to replace the existing fence at its current location. The commissioners generally agreed that a minor rotation would achieve a less

incongruous orientation without being visually disruptive. Hoffheimer added that the applicant will be required to submit an as-built survey.

Senner summarized the commissioners' discussion: The application is consistent with the design standards as it is sited at the end of the existing driveway, minimizing any disturbance or removal of large trees. The proposed materials are consistent with the compatibility matrix and the existing house. The proposed structure is consistent with other carports in the district. Although the commissioners would see it as being more congruous if the carport were kept parallel to the existing house, it would be appropriate even if it were rotated just a couple degrees if possible within setback limitations. The carport was designed to be subordinate to the primary structure.

It was noted that the lattice spacing being tighter rather than looser would be more consistent with the character of the historic district.

Senner closed the public hearing.

Miller noted that he finds the alignment of the carport to be a significant congruence issue and would find it not incongruous if the carport were parallel with the house.

Motion: Riek moved to find as fact that the 212 S. Occoneechee St. application is in keeping with the overall character of the Historic District and complies with all relevant standards of evaluation based on the commission's discussion of the application and the standards of evaluation in Section 3.12.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance because the plans are consistent with the Historic District Design Standards: New Construction of Outbuildings and Garages. Senner seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

Miller reiterated his preference that the commission add a condition that the carport be aligned parallel to the house. Senner said he would find parallel alignment to be more congruous, but that he would not find it incongruous if it were off of parallel by a few inches, based on the design standards related to the siting of outbuildings and garages relative to primary structures.

Motion: Riek moved to approve the application as submitted. Member Daniel Widis seconded.

Vote: 3-1. Nay: Miller

Miller said he based his decision on New Construction of Outbuildings and Garages Standard 1, which recommends siting and orienting new outbuildings in ways that are compatible with their traditional relationship to houses in the district.

- C. Certificate of Appropriateness Application: 316 W. Orange St.
Add new front, side, and rear-yard fencing (PIN 9864882685).

Senner opened the public hearing.

Senner asked whether there were any conflicts of interest or bias among the commissioners. None were disclosed. All commissioners disclosed that they had visited the site in preparation for reviewing the application.

Jennifer Knoepp, the property owner, was sworn in to speak on behalf of the application. Barbara Doyle, a neighbor, was sworn in to offer public comment on the application.

Hoffheimer presented the staff report. He noted that the inventory information, application materials, and applicable design standards would be entered into the record as evidence. He provided the staff comments:

- *Fences and Walls* Standard 8 states the following: “new fences are generally not appropriate in front yards.” The front yard at this property is unique in that it is directly behind another house and is set back over 140 ft. from W. Orange St.
- All the fencing can be approved as minor works, except for the front fencing.

Knoepp introduced the application by explaining that the proposed fence would only extend approximately 10 feet in front of the far side of the house before meeting the house. She noted that because the property is a flag lot set significantly back from the road and because of the siting of the fence, the fence would be largely blocked from street view. Senner provided context on past decisions by the commission regarding front yard fences. Commissioners generally expressed their belief that the fence would still be somewhat visible from the street.

The commissioners reviewed the site plan. The commissioners asked why the fence was designed at an angle and meets the house in the middle of the front plane rather than at the corner. Knoepp explained that the fence was designed to meet the house at a non-perpendicular angle to accommodate an existing driveway and provide dogs with an entrance to the yard directly from the front steps. She said it also was designed to maximize yard space for dogs and children and to enclose a large tree within the fence.

It was observed that while the design standards generally discourage front-yard fences, the fact that this is a flag lot makes it an atypical situation. Knoepp pointed out that there are examples of white picket fences in the district, but the commissioners pointed out that there were no examples of such fences around new construction. Hoffheimer recalled a front fence behind some hedges on West Corbin Street that was approved by the commission a number of years ago, but that they generally have not been approved frequently. The idea of using vegetation to screen the fence was raised, but it was noted that vegetation cannot be relied on as a permanent screen. Hoffheimer recalled another fence on West Queen Street that tied into an existing structure, but it was noted that that application was approved because it was replacing an existing portion of fence that was then extended. Senner observed the challenging nature of the application since flag lots are relatively rare and not entirely congruent with the typical layout within the district.

Widis mentioned that the design standards aim to prevent fences from dominating a home's front elevation. He stated that given the unique characteristics of this lot, including the deep setback and grading, the fence would not compromise the streetscape and expression of the house. Riek pointed out that the standards allow for the commission to consider changes intended to improve security and privacy.

Doyle provided public comment, saying that the fence would increase privacy for surrounding residents.

Riek observed that the fence is not incongruous with the character of other flag lots in the district since there are not many examples of flag lots.

Miller expressed his opinion that the least incongruous solution would be for the fence to stop at the corner of the house or, barring that, at least be perpendicular to the front facade, in keeping with the traditional relationship between fences and houses in the district.

It was suggested that if the fence were moved to meet the corner of the house perpendicularly, it would be better shielded from view by existing vegetation and by the house in front of it. It was generally agreed that siting the fence at the corner of the house would effectively eliminate its visibility in front of the primary plane of the house.

Knoepp said she was amenable to excluding the tree from the fenced area. The commissioners emphasized the importance of avoiding construction within the root zone of the tree and proposed a condition that the fence be located at least ten feet from the tree, with a requirement for staff review if that distance cannot work.

Doyle added that vehicles that regularly park in front of the fence would further screen it from view.

Senner summarized the commissioners' discussion: The application is particularly unique given the flag lot nature of the site and given that the home is largely sited behind another existing home. While the design standards do state that front yard fences are generally discouraged, this home is sited 150 feet back from the street and behind an existing home, so the visible impact of the fence in front of the house is much smaller with regards to detracting from the character defining elevation and detracting from the overall street scape. The impact would be minimized even more if the applicants were to shift the corner of the fence further west so it aligned with the corner of the house so the portion of the fence between the street and the house would be shielded from the street view, further minimizing the impacts that the design standards are trying to avoid.

Senner closed the public hearing.

Motion: Riek moved to find as fact that the 316 W. Orange St. application is in keeping with the overall character of the Historic District and complies with all relevant standards of evaluation based on the commission's discussion of the application and the standards of evaluation in Section 3.12.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance because the plans are consistent with the Historic District Design Standards: Fences and Walls. Miller seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion: Riek moved to approve the application with conditions. Widis seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

Conditions:

- No construction will happen within ten feet of the tree. If the fence posts need to be placed within 10 feet of the tree, that scenario should be reviewed with staff.
- The fence will shift to align with the southwest corner of the house and will extend south down to the property line.

D. Certificate of Appropriateness Application: 131 E. Queen St.

Add a second-story bathroom, remove and replace the west bay with a rectangular addition and glass room, and replace one west window with three windows (PIN 9874172771).

Senner opened the public hearing.

Senner asked whether there were any conflicts of interest or bias among the commissioners. None were disclosed. All commissioners disclosed that they had visited the site in preparation for reviewing the application.

Elizabeth Frankenberg, the property owner, was sworn in to speak on behalf of the application. Cates, draftsman for the application, had already been sworn in.

Hoffheimer presented the staff report. He noted that the inventory information, application materials, and applicable design standards would be entered into the record as evidence. He provided the staff comments:

- The sections of the house proposed to be altered are more recent additions. Staff could not find any construction dates aside from the 1998 second-story bathroom addition. Most of the parts of the house being directly altered are believed to have been constructed in 1998.
- Painting of unpainted brick has been a past concern in the historic district. The brick proposed to be painted in this case is not visible from the street, matches existing brick, and is new.

Cates presented the historical background and structural evolution of the property. He explained that the current owners purchased the home in 1974 and that the kitchen has remained largely unchanged since 1975. Cates showed images of the property from 1975 and 1998 to illustrate the scope of previous additions. He described a formerly screened breezeway that connected the main house to a brick structure, likely the original kitchen house from the 1880s or 1890s, which he noted was originally probably not connected to the main residence.

Cates described the 1998 addition, which involved filling in the breezeway to create a room with glass doors and raising the rooflines to match the existing structures. He noted that a bathroom was built above a laundry room that was formerly located under a one-story shed roof. Other architectural changes mentioned included the installation of a double fascia, the addition of skylights, and a significantly deepened roof structure. Cates pointed out a staircase passing through a closet that he believes is not original because it passes in front of a window, though no official records exist to confirm its origin. He said the original brick kitchen, which has a crawlspace beneath it, now serves as a furnace and storage room for the home's steam heating system.

Cates showed images of the current kitchen and breakfast room and said that the kitchen was relocated to its current location in the 1950s.

Since a floorplan for the second floor was not included in the application, Cates explained the proposed changes. He said that the window on the upper right of the structure will be converted into a door which will enter into a new bathroom and that the existing bump-out will be extended slightly further, though the view from the street will look almost identical to the existing.

Cates noted that while the west side of the building will be changed, these modifications will not be visible from the Street.

The commissioners reviewed the east elevation.

Cates explained that the roofline will be raised to accommodate a continuous ceiling height in the kitchen. He said the existing floor levels vary and there is significant slope to the floors. He said the existing hallway and its ceiling are lower than the kitchen area, and this project intends to resolve the ceiling height difference. This will require a slight adjustment to the plate height and the addition of a couple

rows of siding. He said the siding will be wood and will match existing. Cates said all new elements, including the siding and true divided lite windows, will be wood to match the existing materials of the house. He said all existing fascia trim work will be salvaged and re-installed, with two new pieces created as exact replicas of the originals.

Cates said the corner brackets and two of the windows are not original to the house, and that they likely date back to when the space functioned as a porch. Frankenberg added that the fascia and brackets match the original house but were installed later based on the appearance of the floorboards inside that room. Cates said that inside that room, there is a cornerboard that appears to have originally been an external corner of the house. Frankenberg added that there is also an exterior window inside that room, indicating that the room was added later.

Senner referenced Additions to Residential Buildings Standard 11, which says that new additions must be compatible with the historic structure while providing a clear delineation of the home's evolution through its various additions. He emphasized that it is not appropriate to introduce modifications that result in the loss of character-defining features and encouraged the commissioners to consider what the character-defining elements of this home are.

The commissioners reviewed the north elevation.

Cates clarified that the existing brick on the structure is already painted white. He explained that the intent is to paint the new brick to ensure the addition relates visually to the existing structure it is connected to.

Cates confirmed that the window located behind the chimney is the one to be converted into a door and that the window will shift north to a different plane on the house. He added that the stairwell wall will be moved outward to align with the bathroom wall, bringing the entire section into a single, continuous line, which he pointed out on the east elevation.

The commissioners reviewed the west elevation.

Cates confirmed that the bay window proposed for removal was from the 1998 addition. Senner noted that although the house contains many rich character-defining elements, in his opinion the rear bay window was not among the most significant. Cates emphasized that the applicants strove to preserve the character-defining elevation along East Queen Street.

Senner expressed appreciation for the scale and volume of the proposed brick addition, observing that it is off from the planes of the primary structure which clearly differentiates the addition from the rest of the house and illustrates the sequence of the home's construction and evolution over time.

Cates confirmed that the existing window whose style differs from the other windows will remain and will have glass doors installed in front of it. He added that the window matches a corresponding window on the other side of the house.

Cates clarified that though the CAD drawings show window trim of different widths than the existing, the goal is for the trim to match the existing windows and fascia. Cates noted that the set of three windows will not have shutters.

Cates explained the black membrane in the materials list is to repair the existing black membrane roof at the top of the house.

Senner asked about the requirement within the design standards for differentiating between various eras of additions and how the proposed work avoids making the house look like it was all one addition built at one time because everything is so cohesive.. Cates said that many of the changes are resolving problems created by past additions.

It was observed that the windows on the proposed addition appear modern in style compared to the existing windows. Cates referenced Pilgrim's Rest, a house in the district, noting that its rear additions are cohesive and use comparable materials to maintain the character of the existing house. He expressed the opinion that homeowners should have flexibility on non-character-defining rear elevations, and he acknowledged the tension between the requirement that new work match existing features and the competing design standards that call for differentiation.

Senner pointed out that a vertical framing member on the rear is being preserved, which marks a change in materials and delineates the transition between different eras. Cates added that the bay was squared off because the previous design did not provide sufficient light and volume.

The commissioners discussed the interpretation of some ambiguity in the design standards for additions.

Cates noted that the current state of the property has been fully documented to preserve a record of its evolution for future research.

Senner summarized the commissioners' discussion: The application is not incongruous with the design standards. The work is all happening in the rear of the house, and the modifications are all to additions that were constructed in the last 30 years and are not character-defining components of the home in its totality. All the materials being used are consistent with the compatibility matrix and compatible with the existing home and other homes in the district. Where possible, materials are being re-used: trim, siding, and fascia, to preserve those elements of the home. The proposed new additions and footprint are massed in ways that are subordinate to the existing structure and are clearly differentiated from previous additions to the structure. The resolution of the unique existing rooflines makes the roof form overall more cohesive. Other elements such as the vertical trim materials are preserved to help reference some of the past history of the various additions and evolution of the home over time.

Senner closed the public hearing.

Motion: Miller moved to find as fact that the 131 E. Queen St. application is in keeping with the overall character of the Historic District and complies with all relevant standards of evaluation based on the commission's discussion of the application and the standards of evaluation in Section 3.12.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance because the plans are consistent with the Historic District Design Standards: Additions to Residential Buildings; Windows; Roofs; Doors; and Paint and Exterior Color. Riek seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion: Senner moved to approve the application with conditions. Miller seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

Conditions:

- Trim on the three windows in the kitchen is consistent with the rest of the house.

E. Certificate of Appropriateness Application: 437 Dimmocks Mill Rd.

Add two temporary modular classroom units to the east parking lot (PIN 9864646207)

Senner opened the public hearing.

Senner asked whether there were any conflicts of interest or bias among the commissioners. Riek disclosed that she works at the property under consideration. No other conflicts were disclosed.

Motion: Senner moved to recuse Riek from consideration of the proposal. Miller seconded.

Vote: 3-0.

All commissioners disclosed that they had visited the site in preparation for reviewing the application.

Anne Lebo was sworn in to speak on behalf of the application. Emily Rodriguez was sworn in to provide public comment.

Hoffheimer presented the staff report. He noted that the inventory information, application materials, and applicable design standards would be entered into the record as evidence. He provided the staff comments:

- The cited section of the National Register nomination describes the portions of the mill closest to the proposed modular classroom installation. The entire nomination is attached for reference.
- The narrative and supplemental narrative propose differing numbers of modular units, but the applicant confirmed that only two units are proposed.
- As a reminder, the commission's role is to address the proposal's compatibility with the character of the landmark.
- The applicant submitted a powerpoint presentation, which is available if commissioners would like to look at that for more detailed views of site plans and other images.

The commissioners discussed the fact that the proposed structure is intended to be temporary and free-standing, with no intended permanent impact on the site. It was noted that the building is modest in height and uses materials compatible with both the rest of the Eno Mill and the character of the overall district. Lebo estimated the renovation to take one to two years from the present, during which time the structure would be used.

There was discussion of whether the temporary nature of the structure has bearing on the commissioners' evaluation. Miller expressed that he would view the application differently if the structure were permanent rather than temporary. He pointed out that the design standards provide no specific guidance regarding temporary buildings and suggested the commission establish a time limit for the structure, observing that some structures which are initially meant to be temporary continue to remain in place for years.

Senner said he shared these concerns and emphasized the necessity of preserving the setting and views of the property while the temporary structure is in place.

Lebo clarified that a new concrete pad is not required for the ramp because the structures are being trailered in. Instead, she said the project will use temporary mat foundations. She explained that the ramps will extend back toward the mill, resting on top of the mat foundations. Lebo showed a rendering of the ramp and the walkway leading from the building, showing that each of the trailers will have an exterior door with a dedicated ramp leading to it. She clarified that the blue-shaded areas on the site plan represent both the ramp and the sidewalk.

Lebo provided some additional background for the application, explaining that recent flooding in the lower school of the existing mill building has made it unsuitable for students. She said the school is currently using event space that the landlord would like to reclaim. She said the temporary modular units will allow students to stay on-site while the landlord completes necessary construction work. Lebo suggested that the removal of the units be tied to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the restored space.

Senner proposed that the approval include a specific time duration condition to ensure the units remain temporary.

There was discussion of how future extensions of the time limit might be handled.

Matthew Filter, a board member for The Expedition School, was sworn in. Filter clarified that the school pays monthly rental fees for the modular units and so is financially incentivized to remove them as soon as possible. He added that the landlord and other tenants also prefer the units not remain long-term.

Senner clarified that he was reviewing the application specifically as a temporary classroom building rather than a permanent structure. Lebo confirmed that the units are not intended to replicate or permanently add to the existing facility or change the character of the mill. Widis observed that the modular structures are not significant to its character, noting that the unique context of the situation would likely not set a precedent the commission will regret.

Senner proposed a duration of four years to provide the school ample time to complete its renovations without needing to return to the commission for an extension.

Senner summarized the commissioners' discussion: The application as submitted articulates clearly how the proposed work is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, and how the work has been placed to minimize the impact on the existing mill. It is stand-alone in nature and does not compromise the historic character of the mill. It uses materials that are compatible with the mill. The project is reversible and preserves the site and setting.

Sally Whitaker, who works at The Expedition School and is a past parent, was sworn in to provide public comment. She expressed support for the school and the project.

Senner closed the public hearing.

Motion: Miller moved to find as fact that the 437 Dimmocks Mill Rd. application is in keeping with the overall character of a Historic Landmark and complies with all relevant standards of evaluation based on the commission's discussion of the application and the standards of evaluation in Section 3.12.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance because the plans are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Senner seconded.

Vote: 3-0.

Motion: Miller moved to approve the application with conditions. Senner seconded.

Vote: 3-0.

Conditions:

- Modular units will be removed within four years of this approval. If additional time is required and this condition cannot be met, applicants will review with staff for an extension.

7. General updates

Riek volunteered to participate in an online Certified Local Government training.

Hoffheimer informed the commissioners about a small number of upcoming local landmark designation applications which may come before the commission.

8. Adjournment

Senner adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m. without a vote.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Hoffheimer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joseph" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Hoffheimer".

Joseph Hoffheimer
Planner
Staff support to the Historic District Commission

Approved: August 5, 2026